26. A method of manufacturing a radio frequency identification (RFID) transceiver, comprising the steps of:

a) providing two covers, each cover being composed of a sheet of polymer film;

b) depositing on each of the two covers a barrier material which is impervious to water vapor;

c) mounting an RFID transceiver circuit and a battery between the two covers; and

d) sealing the two covers together along a peripheral contour which completely encircles the transceiver and battery;

a) whereby the barrier material protects the battery from contamination.

27. A method according to claim 26, further comprising the step of mounting between the two covers an antenna connected to the RFID transceiver.

28. A method according to claim 26, wherein the depositing step comprises depositing the barrier material by sputter deposition, chemical vapor deposition, or evaporation deposition.

29. A method according to claim 26, wherein the depositing step comprises depositing as the barrier material a substance from the set consisting of silicon oxide and silicon nitride.

30. A method according to claim 26, wherein the depositing step comprises depositing as the barrier material a substance from the set consisting of polyethylene and polyvinylidenechloride (PVDC).

31. A method according to claim 26, wherein the depositing step comprises depositing as the barrier material a fluorohalocarbon.

32. A method according to claim 31, wherein the fluorohalocarbon is perchlorotetrafluoro-ethylene.

33. A method according to claim 26, wherein the depositing step comprises depositing the barrier material in a thickness of 400 to 10,000 angstroms.

34. A method according to claim 26, wherein the depositing step comprises depositing the barrier material on both sides of at least one of the two covers.

35. A method according to claim 34, wherein the depositing step further comprises depositing the barrier material on said both sides in a thickness of 100 to 400 angstroms.

36. An radio frequency identification (RFID) transceiver, comprising:

a) first and second covers, each cover being composed of at least a first layer and a second layer, the first layer being a sheet of polymer film, and the second layer being a barrier material which is impervious to water vapor; and

b) an RFID transceiver circuit and a battery mounted between the two covers;

c) wherein the two covers are sealed together along a peripheral contour which completely encircles the transceiver and battery;

d) whereby the barrier material protects the battery from contamination.

37. A transceiver according to claim 36, wherein barrier material is a substance from the set consisting of silicon oxide and silicon nitride.

38. A transceiver according to claim 36, wherein barrier material is a substance from the set consisting of polyethylene and polyvinylidenechloride (PVDC).

39. A transceiver according to claim 36, wherein the barrier material has a thickness of 400 to 10,000 angstroms.

40. A transceiver according to claim 36, wherein both sides of at least one of the two covers have a coating of a barrier material which is impervious to water vapor.

41. A transceiver according to claim 40, wherein the barrier material on said both sides has a thickness of 100 to 400 angstroms.

42. A method of manufacturing and storing a plurality of miniature radio frequency identification (RFID) transceivers, comprising the steps of:

a) mounting a plurality of RFID transceivers on a flexible sheet;

b) placing the sheet within an RF shielded dispensing enclosure which prevents RF signals outside the enclosure from being received by the transceivers within the enclosure; and

c) providing an opening in the enclosure through which selected ones of the transceivers can be removed while maintaining the RF shielding of any transceivers which are not removed.

43. A method according to claim 42, wherein the mounting step includes detachably mounting the transceivers to an electrically conductive sheet, whereby the conductive sheet shields the transceivers from RF signals until the transceivers are detached from the conductive sheet.

44. A method according to claim 42, wherein the placing step further includes rolling up the sheet and placing the rolled up sheet within the RF shielded dispensing enclosure.

45. Apparatus for storing and dispensing a plurality of miniature radio frequency identification (RFID) transceivers, comprising:

a) a plurality of RFID transceivers mounted on a flexible sheet; and

b) a dispenser enclosing the sheet, the dispenser having RF shielding to prevent RF signals outside the dispenser from being received by transceivers within the enclosure, and the dispenser having an opening through which selected ones of the transceivers can be removed while maintaining the RF shielding of any transceivers which are not removed.

46. Apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the flexible sheet is electrically conductive and the transceivers are mounted to the sheet detachably, whereby the sheet shields the transceivers from RF signals until the transceivers are detached from the sheet.

47. A method of manufacturing a plurality of radio frequency identification (RFID) transceivers, comprising the steps of:

a) unrolling from roll stock first and second sheets of polymer film;

b) mounting a plurality of RFID transceivers at spaced intervals between the two sheets;

c) after each transceiver is mounted, sealing the two sheets together along a contour encircling that transceiver; and

d) rolling up the sealed-together sheets.

48. A method of manufacturing a radio frequency identification (RFID) transceiver, comprising the steps of:

a) providing a sheet of polymer film having first and second halves separated by a boundary;

b) mounting an RFID transceiver on the first half of the sheet; and

c) folding the sheet in half along the boundary so that the first half of the sheet overlies the second half of the sheet with the transceiver between the two halves; and

d) sealing together the first and second halves of the sheet along a contour which encircles the RFID transceiver.

REMARKS

Claims 1–24 are canceled. The only claims now pending are newly added claims 25–48.

Claim 1 had been rejected as anticipated by Hara. Claims 2–24 had been rejected as unpatentable over Hara in view of Queyssac, and in the case of certain claims, further in view of